
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5296

AN ACT CONCERNING ADMISSIONS TO THE VETERANS' HOME OR TO A HOSPITAL.

SUMMARY:

By law, mentally ill veterans and veterans needing medical or surgical care or treatment may apply for admission to certain hospitals and receive necessary food, clothing, care, and treatment at the state's expense if they do not have adequate means of support. Under current law, the state bears the expense only if no other funds or means of payment are available. This bill eliminates (1) this limitation, requiring the state to pay whether or not other means of payment are available, and (2) the requirement that hospitals provide necessary food, clothing, care, and treatment, at state expense, to veterans the veterans' affairs commissioner determines are entitled to admission.

The bill requires hospitals (1) to ask a patient, on admission, if he or she is a veteran and (2) when submitting a bill (presumably to the state), certify they have taken sufficient steps to determine that no other funds or means of payment are available to cover the cost of the rendered services. (Although a hospital must certify that it has taken sufficient steps to determine that no other payment options are available, the bill eliminates the provision requiring these funds be used first.)

The bill requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs to make available to hospitals a general list of funds or means of payment available to cover veterans' hospital costs.

Under the bill, a veteran who is admitted to a hospital must execute a release allowing the veterans' affairs commissioner or her agents to determine if the veteran has received necessary food, clothing, care, and treatment.

The bill also eliminates the (1) veterans' admission preference to hospitals and (2) commissioner's sole authority to (a) determine whether a veteran is entitled to a hospital admission and (b) move the veteran from one hospital to another, if the care and treatment is paid by the state.

The bill applies to an incorporated hospital or tuberculosis sanatorium, chronic disease hospital, and mental hospital or training school for people with mental retardation. A "veteran" is anyone honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions from, active service in the armed forces, who meets active military requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/11/2014)

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 2 (03/21/2014)